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Aruba's ONLY English newspaper

# NRA shows gun rights power but pushback grows from shootings

By L. WHITEHURST and ALANNA D. RICHER  
Associated Press  
WASHINGTON (AP) — The roster of Republican presidential hopefuls who flocked to the National Rifle Association's annual convention reflects the political potency of gun rights, despite the group's eroding revenues and an opposition movement that's growing increasingly vocal as the drumbeat of mass shootings marches on. Even amid internal turmoil and legal woes, the gun ownership culture and movement that the NRA helped build remains formidable. And the landmark Supreme Court ruling on the Second Amendment last summer has given new strength to gun-rights activists seeking to invalidate firearm restrictions across the country. "On the one hand, the gun-rights movement has never been stronger," said Adam Winkler, a law professor at the University of California, Los Angeles who wrote "Gunfight: The Battle over the Right to Bear Arms in America." But "one of the interesting things about this moment is the NRA, in some ways, has never faced more organizational incoherence and disarray."



An array of pistols are shown in the Dan Wesson display as guests browse firearms at the National Rifle Association's Annual Meetings & Exhibits in Indianapolis, April 16, 2023.

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Associated Press

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# NRA shows gun rights power but pushback grows from shootings

Continued from Front

This year's convention came just days after mass shootings at a school in Nashville, Tennessee and at a bank last week in Louisville, Kentucky, the latter of which marked the 15th mass killing of the year in the U.S. in which four or more people were killed other than the perpetrator, according to a mass killings database maintained by The Associated Press and USA Today in partnership with Northeastern University. That was the most during the first 100 days of a calendar year since 2009, when 16 incidents had occurred by April 10.

"No one wants to see the violence you see in schools and stuff today," Randy Conner, a pistol and rifle instructor for the NRA from Waynesburg, Pennsylvania, told The Associated Press during the event. "But I don't think taking the guns away from ordinary citizens is going to change any of that at all."

The Indianapolis gathering drew a slew of Repub-



Guests browse firearms in the Benelli display area at the National Rifle Association's Annual Meetings & Exhibits in Indianapolis, April 16, 2023.

licans, including former President Donald Trump and former Vice President Mike Pence, potential rivals for the GOP's 2024 presidential nomination. They vowed to defend the Second Amendment and dismissed the idea that gun

restrictions are the answer to violence on the streets. It also came as the NRA grapples with the fallout of infighting and lawsuits. A judge last year ruled that the New York attorney general's lawsuit accusing some top NRA executives

of financial improprieties can move forward, even though the judge rebuffed Attorney General Letitia James' bid to put the group out of business. The NRA filed for bankruptcy in 2021, but a judge dismissed that case, ruling it was not filed in good faith.

Five years ago, the NRA had a \$36 million deficit because of lavish spending, followed by lawsuits from its own members as well as the attorneys general in New York and Washington, D.C.

In the years since, the group appears to have pulled itself out of a financial hole, but not because of an influx of cash, said Brian Mittendorf, an accounting professor at Ohio State University who has studied the group's finances. Revenue fell by 4% in 2020, and by 18% the following year, he found. The group cut back on spending on long-standing programs, including education and training, recreational shooting and law enforcement initiatives, Mittendorf said.

Their primary source of revenue has always been membership dues, but that base has also declined in recent years, and cuts to programs could make it harder to draw in new members, Mittendorf said.

"Despite the fact that they've reduced their footprint, they're still not getting enough revenues to cover their costs. So it suggests something has to give for this organization," he said. Still, a bigger piece of the NRA's influence has been its ability to mobilize people to oppose gun control by creating a social identity around gun ownership, said Matt Lacombe, a Case Western Reserve University political science professor and author of "Firepower: How the NRA Turned Gun Owners into a Political Force." And people are motivated to oppose efforts that feel like a threat to part of their identity, he said.

"The NRA was responsible for creating that identity, but it is now a thing that exists in the world somewhat independently of the National Rifle Association as an organization," he said. "So if the NRA were to fold tomorrow or to go out of business, it's not as though this constituency of people who own guns and who largely view politics through this lens of being a gun owner is going to go anywhere, at least overnight."

Gun sales in the U.S. rose to unprecedented levels during the COVID-19 pandemic, and Florida just became the latest state to do away with requirements that people get a permit to carry a concealed weapon. Meanwhile, the Supreme Court's Bruen decision in June — in a case brought by an NRA-affiliate — has prompted gun rights activists to file a flurry of challenges to firearm restrictions across the country. Judges already have pointed to the ruling, which changed the test that lower courts long used to evaluate gun laws, to declare unconstitutional measures designed to keep weapons out of the hands of domestic abusers and defendants under felony indictment, among other laws.

Yet, the last decade also has seen a growing counterweight in the gun-control movement. □

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# Fox, Dominion reach \$787M settlement over election claims

By **DAVID BAUDER,**  
**RANDALL CHASE and**  
**GEOFF MULVIHILL**  
**Associated Press**

**WILMINGTON, Del. (AP) —** Fox and Dominion Voting Systems reached a \$787 million settlement Tuesday in the voting machine company's defamation lawsuit, averting a trial in a case that exposed how the top-rated network chased viewers by promoting lies about the 2020 presidential election.

"The truth matters. Lies have consequences," Dominion lawyer Justin Nelson said in a news conference outside the courthouse after a judge announced the deal.

Dominion had asked for \$1.6 billion in arguing that Fox had damaged its reputation by helping peddle phony conspiracy theories about its equipment switching votes from former President Donald Trump to Democrat Joe Biden. Fox said the amount greatly overstated the value of the Colorado-based company.

The resolution in Delaware Superior Court follows a recent ruling by Judge Eric Davis in which he allowed the case to go to trial while emphasizing it was "CRYSTAL clear" that none of the allegations about Dominion aired on Fox by Trump allies were true.

In a statement issued shortly after the announcement, Fox News said the network acknowledged "the court's rulings finding certain claims about Dominion to be false." It did not respond to an inquiry asking for elaboration. Inquiries to Dominion and Fox Corp. were not immediately returned.

Records released as part of the lawsuit showed how Fox hosts and executives did not believe the claims by Trump's allies but aired them anyway, in part to win back viewers who were fleeing the network after it correctly called hotly contested Arizona for Democrat Joe Biden on election night.

The settlement, if formally accepted by the judge,



**Attorney's representing Dominion Voting Systems, leave the New Castle County Courthouse in Wilmington, Del., after the defamation lawsuit by Dominion Voting Systems against Fox News was settled just as the jury trial was set to begin, Tuesday, April 18, 2023.**

**Associated Press**

will end a case that has proven a major embarrassment for Fox News.

If the case had gone to trial, it also would have presented one of the sternest tests to a libel standard that has protected media organizations for more than half a century.

Several First Amendment experts had said Dominion's case was among the strongest they had ever seen.

Still, there was real doubt about whether Dominion would be able to prove to a jury that people in a decision-making capacity at Fox could be held responsible for the network's airing of the falsehoods.

Dominion accused Fox of defaming it by repeatedly airing, in the weeks after the 2020 presidential election, false allegations by Trump allies that its machines and the software they used had flipped votes to Biden even as many at the network doubted the claims and disparaged those who were making them.

The company sued both Fox News and its parent, Fox Corp., and said its business had been significantly damaged.

During a deposition, Fox Corp. Chairman Rupert Murdoch, who founded the network, testified that he believed the 2020 election was fair and had not been stolen from Trump.

"Fox knew the truth," Dominion argued in court

papers. "It knew the allegations against Dominion were 'outlandish' and

'crazy' and 'ludicrous' and 'nuts.' Yet it used the power and influence of its

platform to promote that false story." In his March 31 summary judgment ruling, Davis pointedly called out the news organization for airing falsehoods while noting how the bogus election claims persist, 2 1/2 years after Trump lost his bid for reelection.

"The statements at issue were dramatically different than the truth," Davis said in that ruling.

"In fact, although it cannot be attributed directly to Fox's statements, it is noteworthy that some Americans still believe the election was rigged."

In its defense, Fox said it was obligated to report on the most newsworthy of stories — a president claiming that he had been cheated out of reelection. □



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# U.S. charges 4 Americans, 3 Russians in election discord case

By **CURT ANDERSON**  
**Associated Press**

**ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP)** —

Four Americans affiliated with a Black empowerment and political organization have been charged along with three Russians with conspiring to covertly sow discord in U.S. society, spread Russian propaganda and interfere illegally in U.S. elections, according to an indictment unsealed Tuesday.

The U.S. citizens and two Russians were added to an existing case in Tampa, Florida, federal court involving Aleksandr Ionov, described by prosecutors as the founder of a Moscow-based organization funded by the Russian government to carry out a clandestine influence campaign in the U.S. The four Americans are all part of the African People's Socialist Party and Uhuru Movement, which has locations in St. Petersburg, Florida, and St. Louis. Among those charged is Omali Yeshitela, chairman of the U.S.-based organization which was raided by the FBI last summer when Ionov was originally charged.

"Russia's foreign intelligence service allegedly weaponized our First Amendment rights freedoms Russia denies to its own citizens to divide Americans and interfere in elections in the United



**Omali Yeshitela, chairman of the International People's Democratic Uhuru Movement, St. Petersburg, addresses the recent killings of black males, and police on July 8, 2016, in Dallas.**

**Associated Press**

States," said Assistant Attorney General Matthew Olsen of the Justice Department's National Security Division.

"The department will not hesitate to expose and prosecute those who sow discord and corrupt U.S. elections in service of hostile foreign interests, regardless of whether the culprits are U.S. citizens or foreign individuals abroad," Olsen said in a news release.

Yeshitela and three other U.S. citizens Penny Joanne Hess, Jesse Nevel and Augustus C. Romain Jr are

charged with conspiracy to defraud the U.S. Hess, Yeshitela and Nevel are also charged with impersonating agents of a foreign government. Ionov and the other two Russians, who remain in their country, face the fraud conspiracy charge. Court records did not list attorneys for any of the seven defendants, and it wasn't immediately clear if they have been arrested. An email seeking comment was sent to the African People's Socialist Party, which has previously denied working covertly for

Russia or that any members committed a crime.

Prosecutors said Ionov operated an entity called the Anti-Globalization Movement of Russia that was used to carry out its U.S. influence efforts, overseen by the Russian intelligence service known as the FSB. They recruited U.S.-based organizations to help sway elections, make it appear there was strong support in the U.S. for Russia's invasion of Ukraine and backing efforts such as a 2015 United Nations petition to decry the "genocide of African

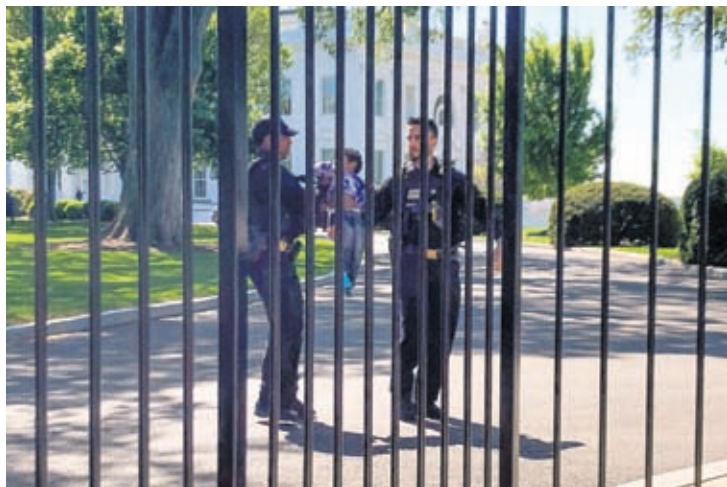
people" in the U.S., according to the indictment.

Among other things, the indictment charges that an unnamed candidate for local office in St. Petersburg received clandestine funding and political strategy from the group. Ionov and another Russian said at one point that their Florida effort would extend to the 2020 presidential campaign, which they called the "main topic of the year."

The Uhuru group did have a candidate who ran unsuccessfully for St. Petersburg City Council in 2019, Eritha Akile Cainion, who is not charged in the indictment. She held a news conference in 2022 in which she defended Russia, saying "world colonial powers have been collaborating against Russia" for more than a century.

St. Petersburg Mayor Ken Welch, a Democrat, called the allegations troubling. "It is important to underscore that the City of St. Petersburg does not support, condone or tolerate any foreign government engaging in activities to undermine or influence our elections," Welch said in a statement. Yeshitela, the indictment adds, traveled from Tampa to Moscow in 2015 to meet with Ionov and other Russians to "communicate on future cooperation," according to an Ionov email. □

## Littlest intruder: Toddler crawls through White House fence



**U.S. Secret Service uniformed division police officers carry a young child who crawled through the White House fence on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, Tuesday, April 18, 2023.**

**Associated Press**

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — A curious toddler on Tuesday earned the title of one of the tiniest White House intruders after he squeezed through the metal fencing on the north side of the executive mansion.

U.S. Secret Service Uniformed Division officers, who are responsible for security at the White House, walked across the North Lawn to retrieve the tot and reunite him with his parents on Pennsylvania Avenue. Access to the complex was briefly restricted while officers conducted the re-

unification. Officers briefly questioned the parents before allowing them to continue on their way.

Secret Service spokesman Anthony Guglielmi said officers "encountered a curious young visitor along the White House north fence line who briefly entered White House grounds."

"The White House security systems instantly triggered Secret Service officers and the toddler and parents were quickly reunited," he said in a statement.

It may be the first successful intrusion onto the

complex since the White House fence was doubled in height to roughly 13 feet (3.96-meters) in recent years after a series of security breaches.

While taller, the new fence has an additional inch of space between pickets, for a total of 5½ inches (12.7 centimeters) between posts.

Older children have sometimes become stuck in the iconic barrier, which has also been the scene of demonstrations, with protesters chaining themselves to the fence. □



## Hunger is soaring and spreading across West Africa, says U.N.

By SAM MEDNICK

Associated Press

DAKAR, Senegal (AP) —

Hunger is soaring and spreading across West Africa, with some 48 million people, a 10-year-high, facing food insecurity in the conflict-riddled region, the United Nations warned Tuesday. Driven primarily by violence as well as the economic fallout from COVID-19 and inflation, food insecurity has heavily impacted Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, northern Nigeria and Mauritania, U.N. officials said at a press conference in Senegal's capital, Dakar. U.N. officials said that for the first time, some 45,000 people in the Sahel region, the arid expanse below the Sahara Desert, are on the brink of starvation, one step away from famine. The vast majority facing catastrophic levels of hunger, 42,000, are in Burkina Faso, the officials reported.

"The situation is worrying," said Ann Defraye, a regional nutrition specialist for UNICEF in West and Central Africa. "Last year, we saw a large increase (31%) in the numbers of children admitted to health facilities with severe wasting across the



Malnourished children wait for treatment in the pediatrics department of Boulmiougou hospital in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, on April 15, 2022.

Sahel. ... In many areas, it is getting much more difficult for families to find nutritious food to eat, especially where we have communities under blockade."

Violence linked to al-Qaida and the Islamic State group has ravaged both Burkina Faso and Mali for years.

Jihadis have blockaded dozens of villages in the region, cut off access to

farms and lined the roads with explosives, making it hard for residents to move freely and forcing aid agencies to fly in food assistance, which is costly.

People living in besieged towns in Burkina Faso say they're struggling to survive.

"We don't have enough food. People eat what they get," a resident of Pama, a

town in the east that has been under blockade for more than a year told The Associated Press.

A few aid groups have managed to provide rice, oil and beans, but women can't grind millet because there's no gas and people can't leave the town because it's surrounded by jihadis, the resident said. He would not give his name for

Associated Press

fear of reprisals from speaking publicly.

As civilians flee attacks and militants expand their reach in Burkina Faso, hunger also is spreading across the border to neighboring Togo and Benin.

Nearly 1 million people are expected to be food insecure in Benin and Togo, almost double the number from two years earlier, according to the UN. For the first time, both countries asked aid groups for assistance in dealing with the influx of displaced people and refugees. "We're really concerned with the coastal countries. If there's not enough done in Burkina (Faso), the risk of increasing numbers of people having to cross the border to find safe haven or livelihood opportunities because they cannot use their land or their livestock have been attacked will increase," said Alexandre Le Cuziat, a senior emergency advisor for the World Food Program in West and Central Africa. "There's still a prevention window in the coastal countries, but it's closing fast. We saw it close fast in the Sahel," Le Cuziat said. □

## Clinton optimistic Northern Ireland govt will be revived

By JILL LAWLESS

Associated Press

BELFAST, Northern Ireland

(AP) — Former U.S. President Bill Clinton said Tuesday he was optimistic that one of Northern Ireland's main political parties would soon end a boycott that has kept the regional government on ice for more than a year.

Clinton said he had met with Democratic Unionist Party leader Jeffrey Donaldson on Monday, and "I left that meeting more optimistic than I entered it."

Clinton is in Belfast this week to mark 25 years since the Good Friday Agreement ended decades of sectarian bloodshed. The deal established a Northern Ireland government with power shared between British unionist and Irish na-

tionalist parties.

The DUP walked out more than a year ago to protest post-Brexit trade rules that imposed a customs

border between Northern Ireland and the rest of the U.K. It has refused to return, despite a deal reached by the U.K. and the EU in Feb-



From left, former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, former US President Bill Clinton, and former Taoiseach Bertie Ahern attend an event marking the 25th anniversary of the Belfast Good Friday Agreement at Queen's University Belfast, Northern Ireland, Monday, April 17, 2023.

Associated Press

ruary to remove many of the border checks.

Clinton said the deal, known as the Windsor Framework, had gone a long way to resolving the political impasse.

"So I expect that, in the not too distant future, the barriers to bringing up the government again will be removed," he told the BBC. "Because everybody knows that economically, socially and politically, they would be worse off if they packed it in over the current level of disagreement."

U.K. Northern Ireland Secretary Chris Heaton-Harris also urged the DUP to go back into government, saying those who valued Northern Ireland's place in the United Kingdom should "put the union first, restore

the devolved institutions and get on with the job of delivering for the people of Northern Ireland."

"The biggest threat to Northern Ireland's place in the union is failing to deliver on these priorities," he told a Good Friday Agreement commemoration conference in Belfast.

The political impasse has left Northern Ireland's civil servants running a skeleton caretaker government, with no politicians in place to make big decisions amid a cost-of-living crisis and a creaking public health service.

The other parties in the Northern Ireland Assembly have expressed frustration, but Donaldson said Tuesday that his party would not be "browbeaten into submission." □



# Apple Inc bets big on India as it opens first flagship store

By **KRUTIKA PATHI**  
Associated Press

**NEW DELHI (AP)** — Apple Inc. opened its first flagship store in India in a much-anticipated launch Tuesday that highlights the company's growing aspirations to expand in the country it also hopes to turn into a potential manufacturing hub. The company's CEO Tim Cook posed for photos with a few of the 100 or so Apple fans who had lined up outside the sprawling 20,000-square-foot store in India's financial capital, Mumbai, its design inspired by the iconic black-and-yellow cabs unique to the city. A second store will open Thursday in the national capital, New Delhi.

"India has such a beautiful culture and an incredible energy, and we're excited to build on our long-standing history," Cook said in a statement earlier.

The tech giant has been operating in India for more than 25 years, selling its products through authorized retailers and the website it launched a few years ago. But regulatory hurdles and the pandemic



An unidentified person holding an old Macintosh Classic machine poses with Apple CEO Tim Cook for a photograph during the grand opening of Apple Inc. first flagship store in Mumbai, India, Tuesday, April 18, 2023.

Associated Press

delayed its plans to open a flagship store.

The new stores are a clear signal of the company's commitment to invest in India, the second-largest smartphone market in the world where iPhone sales have been ticking up

steadily, said Jayanth Kolla, analyst at Convergence Catalyst, a tech consultancy. The stores show "how much India matters to the present and the future of the company," he added. For the Cupertino, California-based company, In-

dia's sheer size makes the market especially encouraging.

About 600 million of India's 1.4 billion people have smartphones, "which means the market is still under-penetrated and the growth prospect is huge,"

said Neil Shah, vice president of research at technology market research firm Counterpoint Research.

Between 2020 and 2022, the Silicon Valley company has gained some ground in the smartphone market in the country, going from just about 2% to capturing 6%, according to Counterpoint data.

Still, the iPhone's hefty price tag puts it out of reach for the majority of Indians.

Instead, iPhone sales in the country have thrived among the sliver of upper-middle-class and rich Indians with disposable incomes, a segment of buyers that Shah says is rising. According to Counterpoint data, Apple has captured 65% of the "premium" smartphone market, where prices range up from 30,000 rupees (\$360). In September, Apple announced it would start making its iPhone 14 in India. The news was hailed as a win for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government, which has pushed for ramping up local manufacturing ever since he came to power in 2014. □

## China's military chief vows to bolster ties with Russia

By **VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV**  
Associated Press

**MOSCOW (AP)** — The Chinese defense chief vowed Tuesday to take military cooperation with Moscow to a new level, a statement that reflects increasingly close Russia-China ties amid the fighting in Ukraine.

Chinese Defense Minister Gen. Li Shangfu held talks with his Russian counterpart Sergei Shoigu after attending a meeting Sunday with Russian President Vladimir Putin in the Kremlin.

"The armed forces of China and Russia will implement the agreements reached by the heads of state and expand military cooperation, military-technical ties and arms trade," Li said in opening remarks at Tues-

day's meeting with Shoigu. "We will certainly take them to a new level."

Li's trip follows last month's three-day state visit to the Russian capital by Chinese leader Xi Jinping, reflecting China's strengthening engagement with Russia. Moscow and Beijing have closely aligned their policies in attempt to reshape the world order to diminish the influence of the United States and its Western allies. China has refused to criticize Russia's actions in Ukraine and blamed the U.S. and NATO for provoking Moscow. Xi's visit to Moscow gave a strong political boost to Putin, sending a message to Western leaders that their efforts to isolate Russia have fallen

short.

After the talks, Putin and Xi issued joint declarations pledging to further bolster their "strategic cooperation," develop cooperation in energy, high-tech industries and other spheres and expand the use of their currencies in mutual trade to reduce dependence on the West.

After more than a year of fighting in Ukraine and bruising Western sanctions, Russia's dependence on China has increased significantly. Facing Western restrictions on its oil, gas and other exports, Russia has shifted its energy flows to China and sharply expanded other exports, resulting in a 30% hike in bilateral trade.



In this handout photo released by Russian Defense Ministry Press Service, China's Defense Minister Gen. Li Shangfu speaks to academy teachers as Chief of the Military Academy of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation Col. Gen. Vladimir Zarudnitsky stands left of him during a visit to Military Academy of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation in Moscow, Russia, Monday, April 17, 2023.

Associated Press

Last month, Putin and Xi also vowed to further develop military cooperation between Moscow and Beijing and conduct more joint sea and air patrols. However, there was no mention of any prospective Chinese

weapons supplies to Russia that the U.S. and other Western allies feared, and the Chinese foreign minister reaffirmed Friday that Beijing wouldn't sell weapons to either side in the conflict in Ukraine. □



## Armand Hessels: The government needs to issue a public apology for misgovernment

(Oranjestad)—Last month, the Good Government Foundation Aruba sent a letter to the minister of Integrity, Ursell Arends, titled “Apology for the consequences of decades of governing and public discussion on our political system.” In this letter, the foundation proposed that the minister issue a public apology to the Aruban community on behalf of the government institution.

“From the beginning of Aruba’s ‘Status Aparte’, the government at that time acquired the internal (financial) control from the Netherlands. To me, that already shows that their intention was not really to obtain control for our benefit,” Hessels commented. “And that remains still. All of that, including political patronage, appointing personnel...you really do see that they don’t give a damn about good governance.”

In his letter, Hessels detailed how bad governance not only break the public’s trust in our institution, but also costs us money: “It costs us millions.”

Bad government had various aspects. Among these are corruption, bad financial management and appointment of politicians. While corruption costs millions of florins, bad financial management and appointment of politicians costs us hundreds of millions of florins, which the Aruban community will have to pay with taxes. These types of misgovernment are systematic, and happen year after year. “That’s where my problem lies: the matter of political appointments, intentional bad financial administration, project mismanagement, which have all cost us hundreds of millions. The so-called autonomy that they pretend to defend is simply their autonomy, to prevent our biggest partner (the Neth-

erlands) from having a say in what the government is doing. This autonomy is not in Aruba’s favor at all.”

Hessels points out that there are surveys that indicate that even the Aruban public does not trust the politicians and are indeed in favor of letting the Netherlands take care of our financial management; something that our politicians would prefer to keep hidden. “The ones who have affected our autonomy is not the Netherlands, but in fact our own politicians that have carried out a deficient and irresponsible management of our finances. All of that created the enormous debt we are currently in right now.”

Currently, Aruba pays 300 million florins a year simple on interest. “And this 300 million is more that what our entire budget is for education,” Hessels added.

In the letter, the Good Government Foundation states that besides the cases of corruption and mismanagement (Ibis, Avestruz, Flamingo, Diamante, Kukwisa, Kwihi and the investigation on ex-minister Besaril), various investigations and demands are taking place, like in Landlaboratorium, where it was discovered a case of embezzlement of 10 million florins; Directie Onderwijszaken, where employees embezzled a total of one million florins from the Beca fund—money that was stolen from education and put into employment, and the anglozaak, better known as “Vacunagate”. This is just the tip of iceberg, because according to the letter, “CAD discovers mismanagement in practically all investigation conducted on government departments.

However, besides corruption, the other aspects of misgovernment—political patronage, arbitration with

evasion of law; non-transparent decision making; failure to adhere to agreements and promises; overall lack of transparency; financial and personal mismanagement—had a big negative impact on Aruba. Misgovernment leads to the government never having money. Aruba is stuck with a government that likes to overspend and that has contributed to a national debt of six billion florins, excluding the obligations from PPP of almost one billion florins. Because of this enormous debt with very high interest rates, very few sustainable investments have been made to amplify the economic foundation of Aruba. Too few measures are taken to reduce costs to contradict the almost yearly rise in costs. Instead, the government keeps looking for new ways to gain profit (a.k.a. tax) to maintain the government. This rise in taxes breaks the consumer power of the public.

### Apology

Seeing the damage done by systemic misgovernment, the foundation proposes that the government issue a public apology to the public. This idea came about when the prime minister of the Netherlands, Mark Rutte, issues an apology on behalf of the government as a historical institution for the country’s past role in slavery within the kingdom.

“It’s no coincidence that the primary points of the second Wever-Croes Cabinet were Good Government, Transparency and Integrity,” as the letter says. In 2017, the new government was apparently well-aware that there concepts have been violated by former administrations. However, that doesn’t mean that the violation ends there. On the contrary, the first Wever-Croes Cabinet fell apart because of possible corruption of coalition part-



ners (resulting in the Flamingo and Diamante cases), while their own party members turned out to have been dishonest, resulting in the retirement of the minister plenipotentiary and the two ex-ministers in the Kwihi Case.”

There are the reasons that confirm the sentiments of the public towards corruption within the government, including administration, as it has been indicated the surveys on the perspective of corruption of the CBA. For this reason, “it is of utmost importance that the government publically acknowledges that the quality of the government since Status Aparte has declined severely, with serious and long-lasting consequences for the Aruban population. This will hopefully drive efforts (through citizen par-

ticipation) to improve the quality of the government and create positive development of our country,” the letter states. “On the other hand, the lack of acknowledgement and apology will reveal that “the politicians” have no intention in changing their ways to finally prioritize the public’s interest.”

“As long as there is no public acknowledgement that they as a government—and I don’t necessarily mean this government now, even though I do think that bad things are happening—do not acknowledge what has taken place systemically, then we as a community cannot trust that they will improve, fix their mistakes and their unacceptable misgovernment of this country,” Hessels commented. □

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## Aruba Tourism Authority honored a loyal visitor at the Marriott's Aruba Ocean Club

**The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure to recognize a Goodwill Ambassador of Aruba. This visitor was respectively honored with a certificate acknowledging her years of visits, loyalty, and love to the island of Aruba.**

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Emerald Ambassador (35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

The honoree was:

Goodwill Ambassador of Aruba  
Ms. Ali Paige Isaacman from Pennsylvania, United States.

Ms. Ali Paige has been visiting the island of Aruba with her family since she was only 10 weeks old, and today we mark her 25th consecutive visit to Aruba!

Ms. Kimberley Richardson representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff mem-

bers of the Marriott's Aruba Ocean Club bestowed the Goodwill Ambassador Certification to the honoree, presented her with gifts, and also expressed gratitude to her family for bringing Ms. Ali Paige along with them to Aruba since she was a baby for so many consecutive years.

Top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by Ms. Ali Paige were:

All the great people who live and work in Aruba

The consistent beautiful weather

The fantastic beach boat rides; water activities

Shopping

Aruba's variety of restaurants to choose from



## Aruba Tourism Authority honored a loyal visitor at the Divi Village Golf & Beach Resort

**The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure to recognize Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba. These visitors were respectively honored with a certificate acknowledging their years of visits, loyalty, and love to the island of Aruba.**

The honor certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests whom have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.



tively.

The three honoring levels are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor (10>years consecutively visiting Aruba)  
Goodwill Ambassador (20>years consecutively visiting Aruba)  
Emerald Ambassador (35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

The honorees were:

Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba  
Mr. Joseph & Mrs. Kelly Aiello from Massachusetts, United States.

Ms. Kimberley Richardson representing the Aruba

Tourism Authority, and staff members of the Divi Village Golf & Beach Resort bestowed the Goodwill Ambassador Certification to the honorees, presented them with gifts, and also thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination and as their home-away-from-home..

Top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by the Aiello's were:

Consistent warm weather  
Aruba's nice sandy beaches  
Friends they have met here in Aruba

Aruba's variety of foods  
Aruba's kind people



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## Research on the history of Dutch Caribbean reefs

Kralendijk – The World Wide Fund for Nature the Netherlands (WWF-NL) is developing an online, interactive exhibition that will visually demonstrate the history of coral reefs in the Dutch Caribbean. WWF-NL urges individuals to submit their photos or videos that portray the coral reefs of the six Dutch Caribbean islands.

The exhibition will highlight the beauty, scope, and

biodiversity of our past and present reefs and will be used by WWF-NL to raise awareness about the importance of protecting coral reefs in our region. One of the main goals WWF-NL works towards is preserving the unique coral reefs in the Dutch Caribbean and the purpose of this project is to show if and how coral reefs have changed over time.

Photos and videos can

help the organization to tell this story. All submissions are welcome. It can be from yesterday or all the way back to when underwater cameras were first invented. The collected materials will be made available for future conservation work via an online archive.

More information about the project can be found on the website [wwfdutch-caribbean.org](http://wwfdutch-caribbean.org). Contact Carolyn Caporusso via [ccaporusso@wwf.nl](mailto:ccaporusso@wwf.nl) for additional questions.



## Aruba to me



ORANJESTAD — You are back or still enjoying your vacation?... we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is ..... Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: [news@arubatoday.com](mailto:news@arubatoday.com) and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation.

Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again. ☐



**beauty  
& THE  
BEACH**

Aruba Today is delighted to share to its readers a new segment called "Beauty and the Beach", where we take a minute to honor our guests who have decided to spend their vacation on our beautiful and warm island.

In this edition, we'd like to give a shout out to **Jason and the gang from Pennsylvania, U.S.A.** It's their first time here and so far they love the beautiful blue beaches! Aruba is always proud to host all families and guests. We at Aruba Today encourage any visitor of the island to send in their pictures and/or messages; who knows? You might get on the cover!

*This segment is sponsored by Alhambra Casino and Shops.*





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Article by Etnia Nativa

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## The Arashi Shell Midden I

Episode 202 - CCII

Destination values, native heritage, and cultural identity are what we advocate for in our own way of safeguarding all reasons to love this island. Etnia Nativa, through this cultural blog, "Island-Insight," shares native cultural awareness, educates, and safeguards Aruba's heritage. It is how we encourage you to experiment with your stay with an island-keeper's state of mind.

This tiny tourist destination has thousands of years of history. Its first visitors were people from the Paleolithic period, who arrived to our island by dugout canoes about 12,000 years; however, very little has been left behind by these people to indicate this claim by those lacking a trained eye. As most of what these hunter-gatherer groups have used and left behind was organic in composition and degrades in a very short period of time.

Paleo burial sites were discovered inland and in a high-salinity terrain within a short distance from the sea at Malmok area. The high salinity ground has much contributed to the preservation of teeth and bones. Other artifacts discovered of these people were items made out of stone, such as tools, projectile points, fire hearth stone and artifacts made of seashells.

Aruba's Shell Midden sites are usually found within 50 meters of the sea, mostly on the South and western coasts. They are generally made out of sand, pieces of conch, mussels, oysters, rounded stones and pebbles. Middens are also found within shores of estuaries and sea inlets but predominate near sandy beaches. Many



shell middens also contain fish, bird, reptiles and mammal bones, prehistoric ceramic shreds and colonial artifacts mixed within the debris as well as pieces of charcoal and other debris used in food preparation.

Middens dating from the ceramic agricultural and early European period of history are often very similar to earlier middens, since such middens were used by various cultures during a prolonged period of time covering different time periods. So these sites may also contain glass, crockery, metal and bones of none native or introduced animals such as sheep, goats, cattle, pigs Etc. These historic middens are found wherever there has been a historic settlement made where there used to be a native settlement. The largest Middens are often in places where hotels or other modern activities are taking place today, like those at the developed coastal areas and a particular one at Arashi, which has been the focal point of our columnist for many years.

He has written many letters to our Department of Culture, the Minister of Culture, Chief of Police, etc., mentioning the need to protect this historical shell Midden. Some thirty years ago, he finally got the attention of D.O.W. (the Department of Public Works), who closed the makeshift entrance to the site by placing some two-ton boulders, preventing campers, motor vehicles, ATVs, and UTVs from reaching, parking, or riding over the Middens. However, after 10 years of protection, tour operators moved these stones, and today one of these Middens has almost completely

disappeared while nobody cares. Yes, it is so sad to see that every weekend and camping season more and more of this particular Midden is being destroyed and eroded by public irresponsibility.

WHAT IS A MIDDEN? 'Midden' is an old English word for a household rubbish dump, and this is the meaning used by archaeologists. Middens are places where food remains, such as shellfish and animal bones, ash and charcoal from fires, and broken or worn-out tools were thrown away, dumped, or buried. Middens can be of Paleolithic hunters and gatherers, Caquetios, or European origin. Middens are one of the most common kinds of archaeological sites found in Aruba.

Intrigued by Aruba's origins and its cultural heritage? Then we encourage you to do something outside of the tourist grid. Become one of the exclusive visitors of Etnia Nativa, a private residential encounter set up, where you will be able to touch and be touched by authentic Aruba heritage, a spectacle of native art, archaic as well as archaeological artifacts, lithic tools, colonial furniture, and other items of the island's bygone era. Get inside a recycled environment full of peace, relaxation, knowledge, and information. □

Etnia Nativa is, since 1994, the home of Anthony, our acclaimed columnist, artist craftsman, and island Piache, who guides and lectures you through his resplendent collection. E.N. is the only place that recreates and introduces you to an authentic glimpse into Aruba's native cultural heritage and its colonial footprint. Something completely different for a change—a contemporary Native Aruba experience!

Appointment is required + 297 592 2702 or etnianativa03@gmail.com



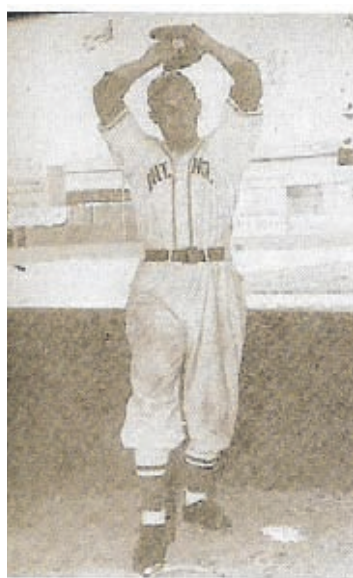


# Short history of the beginnings of baseball in Aruba

(Oranjestad)— Baseball was played on the island of Aruba in the 1930's, but only by United States expatriates working for LAGO and living inside the LAGO colony. Jim Bluejacket, the legendary US Native American who had played in two major league teams, worked for LAGO for 14 years and was a key factor in the growth of the popularity of the game in the colony. There is no record of Bluejacket ever playing outside of the colony.



Outside the colony, the game of baseball was introduced to Aruba by Venezuelan immigrants and sailors on the Venezuelan fishing boats who used Aruba as their home port. They formed pick-up teams and played games on Sundays on an open field behind what is now the Court of Justice. One of the Venezuelans that comes to mind is Felix Garrido, grandfather of our current Prime Minister.



In the late 30s, the leader of this group was Raúl Aparicio, a cousin of Luis Aparicio, who is now enshrined in the Hall of Fame in Cooperstown. The Aparicios were evidently very good at sports. Raúl had two brothers who also played baseball, René and Roman. Rosendo, his only brother who did not play baseball, became a professional soccer player in the Venezuelan league. Rosendo was nicknamed "Cabeza de oro" (golden head) for a memorable header he scored to win a game for his team.



Interestingly, it was in Aruba that Luis Aparicio played his first game outside of Venezuela. This took place in 1950 when he played shortstop for the school he attended. Later he played for "Cabimas" in a double-header of the Venezuelan Western League. These official games of the league were authorized to be played in Aruba by the Professional Baseball Organization of Venezuela. Several others who played



in those games have also been enshrined.

Luis Aparicio's father was the super popular Luis "El Grande" (the great one) after whom the baseball stadium in Maracaibo is named. He and his brother owned the professional baseball teams "Gavilanes" which later became the "Aguilas", and the "Cabimas".

In the early '40s, another group, mostly immigrants from the Dominican Republic also became very active with pickup teams. Some of these remained active in baseball well into the early '50s; as umpires, managers even as players. Among these was Nestor "Pantin" Guerrero, who also had a musical band. Perhaps not so coincidentally, many of Pantin's players were also musicians. Luthai Pantophlet who umpired many years was a well-known drummer. Gaston Hazel was a bongo player; José Bryson and the brothers Nicholson, Teddy and Julio, all played several instruments.

In San Nicolas, baseball was played on the grounds next to where the LAGO Sport Park (now Laveist Sport Park) was officially inaugurated in March 1941.

During the WWII years, baseball got a big lift from the influx of Puerto Rican and US soldiers stationed here. As LAGO was playing a very important role in the struggle against Hitler, it was able to get all the sports equipment needed here to allow more people to participate.

In the '40s only the Lago Sports Park organized baseball championship games. The first teams to participate were Artraco, (Aruba Trading Co.), Esso Garage and Botica San Lucas. In 1945, Venezuelan employees of the Lago refinery participated under the name of "Cafenol", a very popular Venezuelan coffee brand. Two other groups of Venezuelan im-



migrants formed the teams "Cerveceria" (named after the iconic team Cerveceria Caracas), and "Venezuela", although not all members of these teams were Venezuelans. This was also the year that the team sponsored by Roxy Café started to play as "Dodgers". Dodgers became the dominant baseball powerhouse till the 1950s.

Other teams that entered the baseball scene in the late 1940s were Pepsi Cola (Oranjestad) and St. Thomas Boys (former students of St. Thomas College, Oranjestad). "Baby Ruth" in San Nicolas played initially under the name "Camel" and "Barnes' Ramblers", the only team consisting of Lago Colony players to participate in the Lago Sport Park championships. "Red Rock Cola" was formed in Oranjestad in 1950. In 1952, the team Pepsi Cola became "Nesbitt's" and had players of seven countries, including two American expats from Lago Colony.

In 1950, a group of prominent members of the Aruba community founded the Amateur Baseball Bond of Aruba (ABBA) to give structure to the management of the sport and became the organizers of official championship games. While maintaining the existing teams in a league that was referred to as A-class, ABBA established a B-class league in which the "Budweiser" and "Braves" played the first years.

By 1952, Aruba became a member of the International Amateur Baseball Association and fielded a team managed by Joe Proterra,

(former pitcher of "Barnes' Ramblers"), that would play for the first time ever in the Amateur Baseball World Series that took place in Havana, Cuba in September. Surprisingly, Aruba won two of its six games and became the darling of the Havana fans. Nell Harms of the Aruban team was named the "Outstanding player of the week" for his performance against Honduras. He allowed just two hits, struck out 15 and hit the only homerun of the game. Joe Cambria, the famous scout for the Washington Senators offered him a contract, but Nel was not interested, but the next year, at the Amateur Baseball World Series in Caracas, Venezuela, Nel and Ruben Phillips did sign and in 1954 they played professional baseball the Georgia-Florida League and the Texas-New Mexico League. They were the first Arubans to play professionally, but not the only ones.

During the games in Havana, contacts were made with the organizers of Little League Baseball in Cuba which eventually resulted in the introduction of Little League in Aruba. Little League of Aruba has been extremely successful: It has produced many players who earned baseball scholarships at universities in the United States, a few who played professionally in the Netherlands and different countries in the Caribbean and five who reached the major leagues: Calvin Maduro, Eugene Kingsale, Radhames Dijkhoff, Sydney Ponson, and Xander Bogaerts, one of the brightest stars of Boston Red Sox. □



# CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

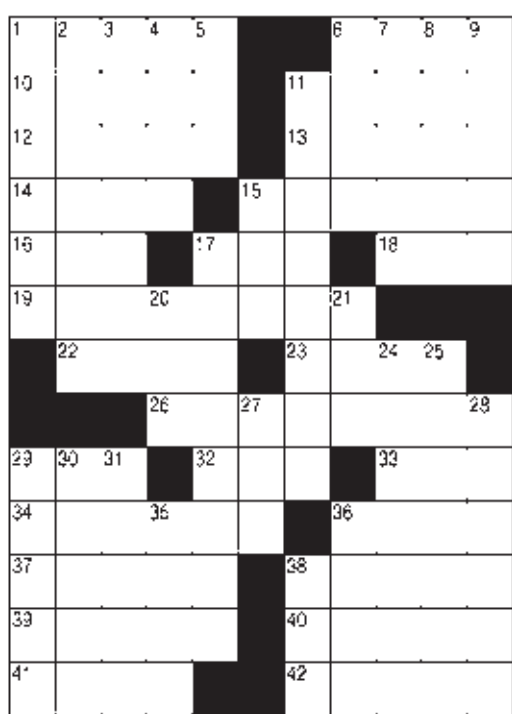
**ACROSS**  
41 Farm females  
1 Lowly workers  
6 Fortitude material  
10 Dance parties

**DOWN**  
11 Ecru  
12 Put up  
13 Trig topic  
14 Brown songbird  
15 Big snake  
16 Do something  
17 Treasury Dept. div.  
18 Gift from Santa  
19 Knick-knack shelves  
22 Way out  
23 Mystique  
26 Some online helpers  
29 Frilly wrap  
32 Ram's mate  
33 Porch sight  
34 Square  
36 Ring of light  
37 Clean with effort  
38 Talk at length  
39 Indian dish  
40 Get up

F	A	S	T	S		C	A	R	O	L
A	D	H	O	C		E	L	E	N	A
D	E	A	T	H	V	A	L	L	E	Y
E	L	M		T	I	S		A	L	E
D	E	S	T	I	N	E		T	A	R
			A	C	E		R	E	N	E
B	R	I	N	K		M	U	S	E	D
L	E	N	S		W	A	D			
O	F	T		T	I	M	E	L	A	G
G	E	E		I	S	M		O	R	E
G	R	A	N	D	C	A	N	Y	O	N
E	E	R	I	E		L	E	A	S	E
R	E	S	T	S		S	O	L	E	S

Yesterday's answer

2 Otologist's case	11 Massa-	28 Go
3 Strain	chusetts	pieces
4 Bottle part	15 Old hand	29 Name
5 Fast plane	17 On paper	on the
6 Polite fellow	20 Quirk	Cardinals'
7 Proper	21 Deli	stadium
8 Dome-shaped home	order	30 Promptly
9 Minute tool	24 Hungary neighbor	31 Squirrel's find
	25 Be-wildered	35 For us
	27 Cobbling	36 Fling
		38 Scandal sheet



A X Y D I B A A X R  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

4-19 CRYPTOQUOTE

P Q I J P K G P M T P T J L L F C B Q G

T N N N T A P B M G N H P M G J N T Z G .

J B A L N N L L F C B Q G L P T N N P B

H Q B P G R P T C G C J N T Z G X A B K T C .

— J I J T C V . T C P M B C W

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: THERE ARE YEARS THAT ASK QUESTIONS AND YEARS THAT ANSWER. — ZORA NEALE HURSTON

## Liz Weston: Retiring? If you need a home loan, get one first

By LIZ WESTON  
of NerdWallet

Retired engineers Kelly and Derek Barkey assumed they would be approved when they applied for a \$50,000 home equity line of credit two years ago to fix up their new house.

The Barkeys, now 56 and 59, had just sold their long-time home in Southern California and paid cash for a house worth about \$850,000 near St. Louis, Missouri. They had retirement accounts worth \$3 million, \$500,000 in a taxable brokerage account and excellent credit scores.

They were surprised when a national bank turned them down. They tried a local credit union, which also rejected them.

"We haven't been turned down for credit since about 1987," says Kelly Barkey, remembering when the couple applied for a rewards credit card while she was still a college student.

### HOME LOANS CAN BE HARDER TO GET IN RETIREMENT

The federal Equal Credit Opportunity Act prohibits lenders from discriminating against applicants based on age, but that doesn't mean getting a home loan in retirement will be easy even for those with good credit, little debt and plenty of savings, financial planners say.

The issue is often proving that you have enough steady income to repay the loan, says Lori Trawinski, director of finance and employment for AARP Public Policy Institute.

Working people can use W-2 forms and pay stubs



This undated file photo provided by NerdWallet shows Liz Weston, a columnist for personal finance website NerdWallet.com.

Associated Press

to prove they have sufficient income. Lenders can verify incomes through IRS transcripts, by calling an employer or using massive paycheck databases such as The Work Number. Lenders typically want to see two years' worth of steady income, but working borrowers aren't required to prove that their incomes will continue at the same rate.

The rules are more complicated for retirees, Trawinski says. In addition to proving they have enough income to pay the loan, retired people often must prove that the money will continue for at least three years, she says.

### HOW MORTGAGE LENDERS VIEW RETIREMENT INCOME

The Barkeys say they draw about \$35,000 a year from their taxable brokerage account, and Derek Barkey earns another \$35,000 by consulting more than enough to support the payments on a \$50,000 home equity line. □

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# Netflix keeps 'Love Is Blind' fans waiting for live reunion

**By The Associated Press**  
**LOS ANGELES (AP)** — Love isn't patient, love isn't kind at least if you ask the fans of Netflix's "Love Is Blind." Viewers had to wait more than an hour to watch the Season 4 reunion special set to stream live Sunday Netflix's second-ever live event on its own platform. "Love Is Blind: The Live Reunion," hosted by Vanessa and Nick Lachey, was to stream from Los Angeles starting at 5 p.m. Pacific. Netflix subscribers were able to join a waiting room for the show 10 minutes before the start time and those who did were still there an hour later. The show finally started airing for some seemingly live at around 6:16 p.m. Pacific, although other Netflix users still reported difficulties accessing the content. "We are sorry we're late," Vanessa Lachey said, the sole acknowledgment of the delay at the top of the broadcast. "To everyone who stayed up late, woke up early, gave up their Sunday afternoon... we are



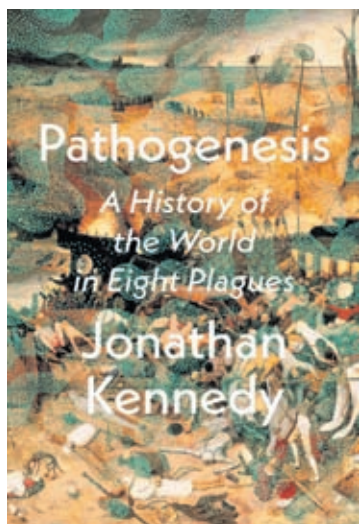
This image released by Netflix shows Nick Lachey, left, and Vanessa Lachey arriving for the season four reunion of "Love is Blind" at Sunset Bronson Studios in Los Angeles on Sunday, April 16, 2023. Associated Press

incredibly sorry that the Love is Blind Live Reunion did not turn out as we had planned," Netflix tweeted at 6:29 p.m. Pacific. "We're filming it now and we'll have it on Netflix as soon as

humanly possible. Again, thank you and sorry." On Monday, Netflix tweeted that the reunion would be available globally at 12 p.m. Pacific.: "Promise." A request for comment

from Netflix was not immediately returned. Netflix's first live streaming event, "Chris Rock: Selective Outrage," did not feature any apparent technical difficulties.

On Twitter, Netflix had acknowledged the delay without offering explanation. At two minutes past the initial start time, it promised the special would be in on in 15 minutes. Seven minutes later, the company tweeted: "Promise #Lovels-BlindLIVE will be worth the wait...." along with a picture of one of the season's "villains." The last activity from the account was a retweet of U.S. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez making a joke about the delay. With the original end time of the special approaching, nothing had been posted since and it remained that way even once the show started airing for some, until the apology tweet. Before the show finally aired, Vanessa Lachey had taken to Instagram briefly live, perhaps ironically from the set to try to entice viewers to stay on, indicating the delay was a technical issue in a post thanking fans for being patient and captioned: "Apparently we broke the internet!"



This cover image released by Crown shows "Pathogenesis: A History of the World in Eight Plagues" by Jonathan Kennedy.

Associated Press

**By TRAVIS LOLLER**  
**Associated Press**  
 "Pathogenesis: A History of the World in Eight Plagues," by Jonathan Kennedy (Crown)  
 Great historical changes are often conceived of as being brought about by the genius and tenacity of great men, or occasionally women, but Jonathan

## Review: 'Pathogenesis' offers different lens on history

Kennedy argues in his book "Pathogenesis: A History of the World in Eight Plagues," that germs are largely responsible for everything from the decline of the Neanderthals to the current poverty of sub-Saharan Africa. His quick history of the world from the Paleolithic to the present day offers a different lens to view many of the big events of the past. Some of Kennedy's conclusions are mere speculation, like his idea that deadly plagues in the Roman empire led to the swift rise of Christianity. In the midst of so much death, he argues, the new religion offered a more enticing view of the afterlife than paganism. Most of his observations are bolstered by more historical research and are more convincing. In showing how pathogens helped the Spanish conquer Central

and South America, Kennedy explains that European diseases including smallpox and measles killed or incapacitated most of the native population, which had no immunity to the previously unknown germs. One outbreak in 1545 alone is estimated to have killed up to 80% of the Indigenous peoples of Mesoamerica. The death and destruction also accelerated their religious conversion as many of the remaining Indigenous peoples, along with the Spanish, saw it as proof that the Christian God was superior, Kennedy argues. On the other side of the Atlantic, Kennedy explains how resistance to infectious disease especially the malaria and yellow fever prevalent in parts of sub-Saharan Africa boosted the slave trade. Disease-resistant Africans were less likely to die on the

new world plantations than Europeans, and much of the native population had already been wiped out. The subsequent association of Africans with slavery contributed to the ideology of white supremacy that continues to impact the way African Americans are treated today, Kennedy argues. The presence of malaria and yellow fever also prevented Europeans from colonizing the African interior, but only for a time. That changed when quinine was discovered to help prevent death from malaria. But because the rates of death and disease were still high, the colonies attracted desperate and ruthless individuals with a desire to make a quick fortune and get out. It was disease, Kennedy argues, that helped create the harshly extrac-

tive colonial economies in places like the Congo, the repercussions of which are still felt in the extreme poverty of those countries. Poverty, including in wealthy countries like the United States, is a sort of modern plague, killing millions each year with both infectious disease and non-communicable diseases like diabetes, Kennedy argues in the final chapter. These poverty-associated health problems, in turn, have been associated with higher death rates during the COVID-19 pandemic. Kennedy ends with a passionate plea for public health expenditures to eliminate disease. Relying on examples of successful public health campaigns throughout the book, he argues that such an investment will both improve human lives and bolster economies.



# Jackson wins defensive player of year over Lopez, Mobley

By **TIM REYNOLDS**  
**AP Basketball Writer**

Nobody blocked more shots per game, nor had better defensive numbers at the rim this season, than Memphis' Jaren Jackson Jr. And voters noticed.

The Memphis big man was announced Monday night as the NBA's defensive player of the year, becoming the second player to win the award while wearing a Grizzlies' uniform. He joins Marc Gasol in that club, after the Spaniard did it a decade ago.

Jackson led the league with 3.0 blocks per game this season, after finishing fifth in the defensive player of the year voting last season. He got 56 first-place votes and 391 voting points to finish ahead of runner-up Brook Lopez of the Milwaukee Bucks, who got 31 first-place votes and 309 points. Cleveland's Evan Mobley in just his second NBA season was third with eight first-place votes and 101 points.

"Team defense really helps us. It goes a long way," Jackson said on the TNT broadcast that announced the award.

The shooting percentage that Jackson allowed at the rim 46.9% was the best



**Los Angeles Lakers forward Anthony Davis (3), center, loses control of the ball between Memphis Grizzlies forwards Jaren Jackson Jr. (13) and Dillon Brooks (24) during Game 1 of a first-round NBA basketball playoff series Sunday, April 16, 2023, in Memphis, Tenn.**

Associated Press

in the league among those with at least 300 shots defended there, and was an obvious plus on Memphis' path to the No. 2 seed in the Western Conference playoffs.

"Hands down, no-brainer, JJ's definitely defensive player of the year," Memphis coach Taylor Jenkins said earlier this month.

Jenkins could get into all the analytics that he wants, but the simple eye test

also tells the story. Jackson wasn't ready for the start of the season because his surgically repaired right foot needed more recovery time. And Memphis was, well, not great on defense while waiting for Jackson to get ready.

Jackson gave Jenkins and the Grizzlies' staff much credit for his role in helping him win the award.

"They've instilled the confidence in me to be aggres-

sive offensively but really unleash me defensively to go out there and do whatever," Jackson said.

Lopez, the runner-up, had never been this close to a major individual award in his 15 NBA seasons.

Even though he's always been a shot-blocker he's swatted 1.8 per game throughout his career — this was the first time that Lopez was a serious candidate for the DPOY award. He fin-

ished 10th in the balloting in 2020, a season in which his Milwaukee teammate Giannis Antetokounmpo took home both that award and MVP.

Lopez blocked a career-best and league-high 193 shots this season, plus contested 17.5 shots per game by far the most of anyone in the league.

Golden State's Draymond Green was fourth, followed by Miami's Bam Adebayo in fifth, Antetokounmpo in sixth, Toronto's O.G. Anunoby and Milwaukee's Jrue Holiday tied for seventh, Philadelphia's Joel Embiid and Brooklyn's Nic Claxton tied for ninth, Chicago's Alex Caruso in 11th and Miami's Jimmy Butler in 12th.

The award was the first major individual one to be announced by the league this season.

Three more awards are scheduled to be revealed later this week Coach of the Year (Sacramento's Mike Brown, Oklahoma City's Mark Daigneault or Boston's Joe Mazzulla) will be announced Wednesday and Sixth Man of the Year (Boston's Malcolm Brogdon, Milwaukee's Bobby Portis Jr. or New York's Immanuel Quickley) will be revealed Thursday. □

## MLB uses Atlantic League to test more rule changes

By **DAVID BRANDT**  
**AP Sports Writer**

**PHOENIX (AP)** — Major League Baseball isn't done tinkering with potential rule changes for the sport.

The league announced a series of experimental rules Tuesday that will be used in the Atlantic League this season, including a designated pinch runner, "double-hook" designated hitter rule and further limitations on a pitcher's ability to make pickoff moves.

The designated pinch runner rule allows a player who is not in the starting lineup to be used at any point of the game as a substitute baserunner. The player who was subbed out, as well as the pinch runner, would still be

able to return to the game. The "double-hook" designated hitter rule allows teams to use the DH throughout the game as long as the starting pitcher throws at least five innings. If that doesn't occur, the team loses its DH and the pitcher's spot would bat for the remainder of the game. The rule was also used in the Atlantic League last season.

There's also a single disengagement rule, which means pitchers can only take their foot off the rubber once per at-bat to attempt a pickoff or reset the pitch clock. The Atlantic League is an independent, minor league that has been a designated MLB Partner

League since 2019, helping the sport test new rules. Some of the rules have stuck and eventually been used in the big leagues, while others haven't.

MLB has debuted a series of rules changes this season that were tested throughout the minors, including the Atlantic League. The new pitch clock has shaved about 30 minutes off game times through the season's first three weeks, while limits on the infield shift and bigger bases have helped boost offense. "We thank the Atlantic League for their continued partnership," said Morgan Sword, MLB's Vice President of Baseball Operations, in a statement. "In recent years, the ALPB's

experimental rules have aimed to emphasize athleticism, improved pace of

play and other means of giving fans the game they want to see." □



**Chicago White Sox's Tim Anderson, right, slides safely into second with a stolen base ahead of a tag-attempt by Pittsburgh Pirates second baseman Rodolfo Castro (14) during the seventh inning of a baseball game in Pittsburgh, Saturday, April 8, 2023.**

Associated Press



# Damar Hamlin cleared to play, 4 months after cardiac arrest

By JOHN WAWROW

AP Sports Writer

ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. (AP)

— Wearing a red cap and a Buffalo Bills pullover, safety Damar Hamlin sat down at the podium and declared he's ready to resume playing football.

"This event was life-changing, but it's not the end of my story," Hamlin said Tuesday, speaking at a news conference at the team's facility for the first time since he went into cardiac arrest and had to be resuscitated on the field during a game at Cincinnati some four months ago.

"I plan on making a comeback to the NFL," Hamlin added.

"My heart is still in the game. I love the game. It's something I want to prove to myself, not nobody else. I just want to show people that fear is a choice, that, you know, you can keep going in something without having the answers," he said. "You might feel anxious, you might feel any type of way, but you just keep putting that right foot in front of the left one and you keep going."

Hamlin spoke a few hours after general manager Brandon Beane announced that Hamlin was cleared to play and was attending the team's voluntary workout program, the latest and biggest steps in the 25-year-old's remarkable recovery.

"He's fully cleared. He's



**Buffalo Bills safety Damar Hamlin speaks to reporters at the NFL football team's facility in Orchard Park, N.Y., Tuesday, April 18, 2023, saying he plans to resume his football career after being cleared to play more than four months after going into cardiac arrest and needing to be resuscitated on the field during a game at Cincinnati.**

here and he is of the mindset. He's in a great headspace to come back and make his return," Beane told reporters.

Beane said the clearance came after Hamlin met with a third and final specialist on Friday, with all three being in agreement that Hamlin can resume playing without any fear of setbacks or complications. While the Bills had their head athletic trainer sit in on Hamlin's meetings with specialists, Beane said the team is following the lead of the specialists.

"He's such a great kid and has such a great family, and it's exciting to go from

a guy who was fighting for his life to now," Beane said. "His story hasn't been written. Now it's about his comeback."

Hamlin said the specialists agreed that his heart stopped as a result of commotio cordis, which is a direct blow at a specific point in a heartbeat that causes cardiac arrest.

Hamlin's teammates were elated to see him back in the facility working out.

"D-Ham is a special person, a beautiful soul," fellow safety Micah Hyde said. "I look up to him, especially how he's bounced back after facing adversity. A little scary. But to see him

well and in the building and move around a little bit, it gives you a little energy."

Hamlin's recovery is personal to many who watched in shock as Hamlin collapsed on the field on a nationally televised "Monday Night Football" game, but more so for Beane. While the Bills returned home after the game initially was suspended and eventually canceled, Beane spent the first four days at Hamlin's side, including when he was awakened from a medically induced coma at the University Cincinnati Medical Center.

"It was all about his health, and it's always going to be

about his health," Beane said.

"But to truly, you know, however many months later be talking about he's fully cleared is pretty remarkable.

And I'm excited for him and his family where for where they are on his journey."

Hamlin collapsed after making what appeared to be a routine tackle in the first quarter of a Jan. 2 game against the Bengals. His collapse led to an outpouring of support from around the NFL and across North America, with donations made to Hamlin's charitable organization topping more than \$9 million.

The second-year player from Pittsburgh's exurb of McKeesport spent nearly 10 days recovering in hospitals in Cincinnati and Buffalo before being released. He eventually began visiting the Bills' facility and attended the team's season-ending 27-10 loss to Cincinnati in the divisional round of the playoffs.

Hamlin has since made numerous appearances around the country, including meeting with President Joe Biden last month.

Biden posted a tweet on the visit that read: "Hamlin's courage, resilience, and spirit inspired the American people.

And what's more: he turned recovery into action and our country is better for it." □



**The Olympic rings are displayed outside the basketball arena in the Olympic Park before the start of the 2012 Summer Olympics in London, on July 15, 2012.**

Associated Press

## Russia excluded from men's basketball at 2024 Olympics

**MIES, Switzerland (AP)** — Russia has been excluded from qualification for the men's Olympic basketball tournament in Paris next year, basketball's international governing body FIBA said Tuesday.

The decision was widely expected since FIBA has suspended Russia's teams from international play since shortly after the invasion of Ukraine last year. The International Olympic Committee favors allowing individual athletes from Russia and its ally Belarus to compete as neutrals, but not as national teams, like in basketball.

Russia's world ranking was high enough for it to play Olympic pre-qualifying tournaments this year, but that place will be given to Bulgaria as the next-highest-ranked team from Europe, FIBA said in a statement citing the IOC's recommendations.

The Russian women's team already missed out on qualification when it was suspended from the World Cup and EuroBasket qualification last year. Belarus cannot qualify men's or women's teams.

There was no information Tuesday from FIBA about 3-on-3 basketball, which is also an Olympic event. □